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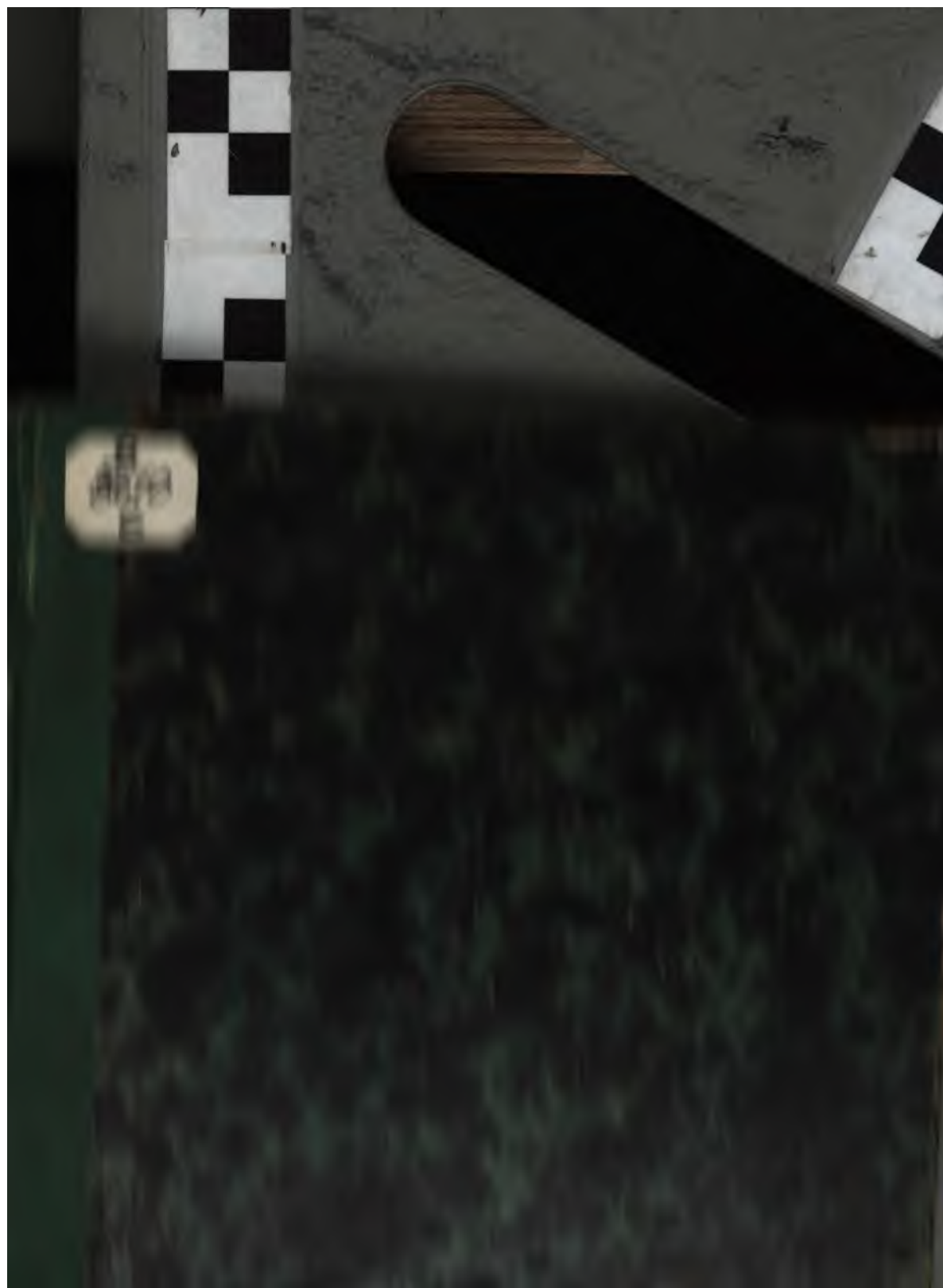
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From the Author
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Mitchell Library
Glasgow

IV. 359

THE
FREE LIBRARIES
OF
SCOTLAND.

BY
AN ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN.



GLASGOW:
JOHN SMITH & SON, 129 WEST GEORGE STREET.
1880.

PRICE SIXPENCE.



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THE

FREE LIBRARIES

OF

SCOTLAND.

BY

AN ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN,

Thomas Mason.

GLASGOW:

JOHN SMITH & SON, 129 WEST GEORGE STREET.

1880.

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1880. Oct. 11.

Wife

Thomas Mason,

Glasgow.

FREE LIBRARIES OF SCOTLAND.

THE purpose of the following pages is to give a brief sketch of the progress of the Free Library Movement in Scotland. Hitherto writers on the subject of the Free Libraries of this country have not considered it necessary to extend their inquiries beyond the limits of the sister Kingdom; and while several bulky volumes and papers innumerable have appeared bearing on the English Free Libraries, no detailed information—as far as we are aware—exists regarding those of Scotland. A desire to fill, in some measure, however inadequately, this blank in Library history, will, we trust, be sufficient excuse for the appearance of the present pamphlet. Before proceeding to our subject proper it may not be unprofitable to take a glance at some of the earlier efforts towards providing Public Libraries in Scotland.

In 1791 Mr. Walter Stirling, Merchant, and some time Magistrate in Glasgow, bequeathed the sum of £1,000, some property, and his own collection of books, for the purpose of founding a Library for the use of the citizens of Glasgow. This liberal-minded gentleman, desirous, no doubt, of handing down his name to future generations, as the founder of a useful public institution, and also of securing for the people of his native city the inestimable privilege of free reading, wisely inserted in his will two clauses bearing on the perpetuity, and on the freedom of access to the Library:—"No regulations or alterations which may be made or agreed to shall be inconsistent with or strike against the chief or primary view of this donation,—viz., the constant and perpetual existence of a Public Library for the citizens or inhabitants of Glasgow;" and the Librarian "shall allow all proper persons to consult and read the books three hours each lawful day." Notwithstanding the very clearly expressed

wish of Mr. Stirling, it does not appear that the Library was available to any save subscribers for at least half a century after the death of the testator. In 1848 it was placed on a more popular basis; the subscription was lowered, and the Library thrown open to the general public for a few hours each day. Since then it has increased in popularity and usefulness; but it never has been at any time very popular, and certainly is not even now utilized to anything like its full resources. The collection at present numbers about 40,000 volumes.

The town subscription Libraries of Scotland, which, from very small beginnings, have, in many places, become important collections, date back as far as 1762. In that year the Ayr Library was founded. For a considerable period after this, however, very few additional Libraries were formed; and the greater number of the subscription and professional Libraries had their origin in the first and second decades of the present century. Most of these are still in existence; but their circulation is exceedingly limited. They are rich usually in the best books of the last century, and the early part of the present; and would form excellent nuclei for Libraries of a more popular nature. This has been done in most cases where the Libraries Act has been adopted—the subscribers generously handing over their books for the public behoof.

Early in the present century the growing desire for reading, and the very inadequate attempts made at supplying it, attracted the serious attention of a gentleman in East Lothian,—the late Mr. Samuel Brown, of Haddington,—and inspired him with the idea of the system of Itinerating Libraries, with which his name has become identified. His plan was as follows:—"The books were formed into divisions of fifty volumes each; one of these divisions was stationed in a place for two years, and the books were issued to all persons above twelve years of age willing to take care of them; after that time it was removed to another town or village, and a new division was sent in its room, which, after two years, was again exchanged for another. A perpetual succession of books was thus introduced to each place, and by this means readers was effectually kept up." The success was great;—a Library in North Berwick, of 1816, had an issue of but 20, was

handed over to the Itinerating Libraries, on condition that Mr. Brown stationed two divisions in the town and two in the neighbouring villages. Of the 100 volumes stationed at North Berwick there were issued during the first year 769,—every book being thus issued, on an average, seven and a-half times. The issue fluctuated, decreasing always in the second year of the division; but on an average of six years the annual issue was 863, which, in a library of but 100 volumes, was a substantial success. Mr. Brown gave his whole heart and soul to the work, engaging in the sale of religious periodicals, and devoting the profits to the undertaking. He was materially aided by friends, and still more so by a system which he introduced in 1821—the fifth year of the Libraries—of reserving new books for the use of subscribers, afterwards passing the books into the divisions to be issued gratuitously. The annual subscription was three shillings, afterwards raised to five. Mr. Brown's labours were confined to East Lothian, in which, at one time, there were as many as fifty of these Libraries. The scheme attained its greatest success about 1832. In that year a charge was made of a penny per volume; the books to be issued the following and every second year without payment. This affected the scheme considerably, and was, in fact, one of the chief causes of its decline. Mr. Brown was in favour of making a charge, but did not begin to do so until he thought the readers had acquired such a taste for literature that they would be willing to pay for their reading. Unfortunately it turned out otherwise; the number of readers regularly fell off during the payment period, increasing every second year when the reading was free. The death of Mr. Brown in 1839, and the decease of many of his original supporters, tended materially to accelerate this decline; and of the vast network of Libraries which his indomitable energy and enthusiasm had spread over his native county very little now remains. The Itinerating scheme has attracted considerable attention, and is perhaps the most feasible yet devised towards providing libraries for the residents in country districts. A system of Itinerating Libraries, extending over the whole of the rural districts of the three Kingdoms, and under Government control, has been suggested more than once by several eminent authorities on Library matters. Such a scheme, though vast, is not impracticable; and is the only one likely to

realize Mr. Brown's truly noble wish, of having a good and easily accessible Library within a mile and a half of every inhabitant of the country.

In the spring of 1849, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed, on the motion of Mr. William Ewart, M.P. for the Dumfries Burghs, to inquire into the state of the Public Libraries of Great Britain and Ireland. The Committee consisted of fifteen gentlemen, including Lord Houghton and Mr. Disraeli. Under the chairmanship of Mr. Ewart, the Committee held numerous sittings, and examined many witnesses, several of whom came from Scotland. The evidence given shewed conclusively, that in the matter of Libraries, Great Britain was far behind the United States and the most of European countries. In Scotland they found, that in addition to the Itinerating Libraries already described, Farmers' Libraries had been established in the counties of Argyle, Lanark, Berwick, and Dumfries; Stirling's Library, as we have already indicated, had been re-modelled; and in the town of Peebles, a very good though small Library and a reading-room had been established, chiefly through the liberality of Messrs. Chambers, the well-known publishers of Edinburgh.

The University Libraries of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, were closed to all save students; while that of St. Andrews, although much more easy of access, was not in the generally accepted sense of the term "free," and could, of course, only be used for reference purposes. Several of the larger towns, as already shewn, possessed subscription and also Mechanics' Institute Libraries; and in many villages small collections of books, chiefly religious and old, were to be found.

The broad result of the inquiry, which was conscientious and thorough, made it abundantly manifest that collections of books of an interesting character were beyond the reach of the mass of the people.

The first fruit of the inquiry was the Library Act of 1850, which provided for the establishment of Libraries, Museums, and Picture Galleries, in towns having a population of not less than ten thousand. This Act only applied to England. In 1854 it was extended to Scotland and Ireland; and a year afterwards a General Act for Scotland (17 & 18 Vict., cap. 64) and a

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General Act for Ireland (18 & 19 Vict., cap. 40) were passed, repealing the extension Act. In the following year the English Act of 1850 received considerable amendment. A long period now elapsed before any further change took place in the laws relating to Libraries and Museums. In 1866 two very important alterations were made—the majority necessary for the adoption of the Act was changed from two-thirds to just “more than one-half,” and all restrictions as to population were removed. This amendment applied to all three countries.

In the session of 1867 an Act was passed “to amend and consolidate the Public Library (Scotland) Act.” As this Act (30 & 31 Vict., cap. 37) forms the basis of the present law on the subject as affecting Scotland, it seems advisable to give a brief summary of it and the several Acts by which it has been amended.

The Act consists of seventeen sections, the first of which repeals the Library Act (Scotland), 1854, and as much of the Amendment Act, 1866, as applied to Scotland, except as to anything done under them. The second section defines the meaning which the various terms used in the Act shall bear. “Burgh” shall mean a Royal Burgh, or a burgh or town to which Magistrates and Council were provided by 3 & 4 Will., cap. 77. “District” shall mean a Burgh of Barony, a Burgh of Regality, or any other populous place not coming under the meaning of the term Burgh. “Board” shall mean the Parochial Board acting under 8 & 9 Vict., cap. 83; and in “Districts” it shall mean the Commissioners, Trustees, or other body of persons, by whatever name distinguished, for the time being in office, and acting in execution of Special, Local, or General Police Act. “Householders” in all Burghs shall mean all persons entitled to vote in the election of members of Parliament; but in Districts it shall mean all persons assessed under, and for the purposes of any Local or General Police Act which may be in force therein; and in Parishes it shall mean all rate-payers under 8 & 9 Vict., cap. 83. The expression “Police Rates” shall mean the rates, tolls, rents, income, and other monies whatsoever, which, under the provisions of any Police Act, shall be applicable for the general purposes of such Act. The third section relates to the calling of a public meeting

for the purpose of considering the adoption of the Act, and has been amended by the Public Libraries Amendment Act, 1877, under which it is now optional for the chief magistrate either to call a public meeting, or to issue voting papers to the householders. The fourth section provides that the Act shall come into operation immediately on its adoption by a majority of the householders present at the meeting; by the Amendment Act of 1877, this also applies to a majority obtained by voting papers. The fifth section enacts that the expenses incurred in determining whether the Act be adopted or not, and of carrying the Act into execution when adopted, shall be paid out of the Police Rates,—the authorities being empowered to levy a rate for Library purposes, either as a separate rate or as part of the Police Rates. The sixth section provides that the amount of the rate shall not exceed *One Penny in the Pound of Yearly Rental*; and the authorities shall provide and keep books in which shall be entered true and regular accounts of their receipts, payments, and liabilities with reference to the execution of this Act; such books to be open to the inspection of every person liable to be assessed by virtue of this Act. The seventh section gives power to the authorities to borrow such sums of money as may be required for carrying the Act into execution.—By the Amendment Act, 1871, the borrowing power was limited to the fourth of the Library rate of a penny per pound, capitalized at the rate of twenty years' purchase of such sum.—The eighth section extended the Clauses and Provisions of "The Companies Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act, 1845," to the Act respecting the borrowing of money, accountability of Officers, and the recovery of Damages and Penalties. This was repealed by the Act of 1871, the "Commissioners Clauses Act, 1847," being substituted. The ninth section defines the Boundaries of Burghs and Districts to be the same as those under 13 & 14 Vict., cap. 33, and 25 & 26 Vict., cap. 101, or any Local Police Act which may for the time being be in force. Under the tenth section the Authorities may appropriate for the purposes of the Act any Lands or Buildings vested in them; and also, out of the rate levied or money borrowed, purchase, feu, or rent any Land, or any suitable Building; and may upon the Land so appropriated, rented, feued, or purchased, erect any Buildings for Public

Libraries, Art Galleries, or Museums, or each respectively; and may alter, extend, repair, improve, fit up or furnish any Buildings for such purposes. The eleventh section incorporates with the Act certain sections of the "Lands Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act, 1845," bearing on the Purchase of Lands, &c.; and the twelfth section authorizes the selling or exchanging of Lands, &c., vested in the Council or Board, for the purposes of the Act, also the selling or exchanging of Books, Works of Art, or other Property of which there may be duplicates. By the thirteenth section, the Library Property is vested in the Magistrates and Council in case of a Burgh, and in case of a District or Parish, in the Board. The fourteenth section provides for the election of a Committee of Management, and the fifteenth relates to the Meetings and Chairman of Committee. The remaining sections enact, that "If any meeting called, as aforesaid, to determine as to the adoption of this Act for any Burgh, District, or Parish, shall determine against the adoption, no Meeting for a similar purpose shall be held for the space of two years at least, from the time of holding the previous Meeting;" and "wherever a Public Library has been established under any Act relating to Public Libraries and Museums, or shall hereafter be established under this Act, an Art Gallery or Museum, as the case may be, may at any time be established in connection therewith, without any further proceedings being taken under this Act;" and "all Libraries, Art Galleries, or Museums established under this Act, shall be open to the Public free of all charge." The Amendment Act of 1871, in addition to the alterations already noted, provided for the creation of a sinking fund; the annual auditing and publishing of accounts, and directed that estimates be made up annually of the expenditure for the ensuing year. Power is also given to make bye-laws; and all actions are to be conducted in name of the clerk. Directions are given as to filling up vacancies in the Committee, and power to lend out the books, and also to lend them to Institutions. The Amendment Act of 1877 relates mainly to the manner of obtaining the opinion of the Householders regarding the adoption of the Act. In addition to the simple yes or no, the voter may signify his willingness that the Act be adopted with less than the maximum rate. The laws relating to the subject stand very much in need of consolidation.

Successive amendments have made them anything but concise, and in none of the three countries are they exactly alike.

The first place to take advantage of the Act in Scotland was Airdrie. That burgh adopted it in 1856, in which year was opened the first "Free Public Library" in Scotland. The progress of the movement inaugurated at Airdrie was considerably retarded by the severe commercial depression of the following years; and we hear very little of it until 1864, when Lord Provost Blackie brought the matter before the Glasgow Town Council. Although productive of no definite result in his own city, Mr. Blackie's exertions helped to bring the movement once more to the front. The success attending the adoption of the Act in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and other large towns in England, also gave it a considerable impetus; and from this time it began to make appreciable headway, and to rank amongst those reforms which are popularly regarded as inevitable.

In 1866 it achieved its crowning success in Scotland, the Act having been adopted in Dundee unanimously. In March, 1867, it was adopted in Paisley; and May of the following year witnessed an unsuccessful attempt to put it in operation in Edinburgh.

Since then the following places have taken advantage of the Act:—Forfar, Thurso, Galashiels, Inverness, Hawick, and Dunfermline. Unsuccessful attempts have been made in Aberdeen, Arbroath (twice), and Glasgow. With reference to these places more detailed information may now be given, taking them in the order of their adoption or rejection of the Act. First on the list comes

AIRDRIE.—The Act was adopted in this burgh at a public meeting in 1856, with very few dissentients, and the Library was opened during the same year. No record seems to have been kept of the annual issues, and, indeed, but little information can be gleaned regarding this Library; but it appears to have been fairly well patronized. The collection, necessarily small at first, has increased, by purchase and donation, until it now numbers nearly 4,000 volumes. The issue last year was over 18,000, of which fiction forms about sixty per cent. Hitherto the library buildings have been of a very primitive and insecure character,

being composed entirely of wood; but the owner, a gentleman to whom the Library has been indebted more than once, has generously announced his intention of replacing the present erection with a handsome and substantial stone structure. The usefulness of the institution has been considerably increased by the opening, last year, of a Reading-room, which is supported wholly by voluntary subscription. The population of Airdrie, at the last census, was 15,671, and the annual revenue derived from the penny rate is £112. The Library is managed by a committee of fourteen, consisting of the Provost, Magistrates, and a few others.

DUNDEE.—This burgh, which ranks third in population, and second in commercial importance among the towns north of the Tweed, shewed its appreciation of the value of a Free Library so long ago as 1866. On the 6th September of that year, at a large public meeting called by the Provost, the Act was adopted unanimously, and a subscription, to defray the initial expenses in connection with the founding of the Library, realized the handsome sum of £4000. By virtue of a clause in the title-deeds of the Albert Institute,—a building designed to perpetuate the memory of Prince Albert, and which was then in course of erection,—accommodation was provided for the Library within its walls; and in 1869, when the structure was partially completed, the Library was opened. The Institute occupies the centre of an irregular open space near the middle of the town, and presents a most imposing appearance. The entire cost of erection, including the Picture Gallery and Museum, built in 1873, amounted to £40,000, of which £27,000 was raised by public subscription by the Albert Institute Company, (who for nine years retained the superiority of part of the buildings;) £10,000 was borrowed on security of the rate; and £2,100 was given by the Town Council from the common good of the burgh. The style of the building is Gothic, and the plans were prepared by the late Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A. On 1st July, 1869, the Lending Library was formally opened by Provost Hay; and on 11th October of the same year the Reference Library was opened,—the whole stock of books at that time numbering over 8,000 volumes. The following statistics are compiled from the annual reports,

and shew the extent to which the Library has been made use of:—

YEAR.	ISSUE.
1869-70, - - - - -	133,239
1870-71, - - - - -	123,864
1871-72, - - - - -	126,007
1872-73, - - - - -	120,419
1873-74, - - - - -	115,158
1874-75, - - - - -	136,162
1875-76, - - - - -	143,517
1876-77, - - - - -	151,327
1877-78, - - - - -	151,898
1878-79, - - - - -	177,864

Total issue since opening, - -	<u>1,379,455</u>
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As might have been anticipated, when the first flush of novelty had worn off a decrease in the issue took place. The third year marked a slight increase, which was more than counter-balanced, however, by the falling off in the two years immediately succeeding. Experience has shewn that the fourth or the fifth year of the life of such institutions is the most critical period of their existence, and the test supplied by this stage is generally regarded as crucial. Happily for Dundee the result has been satisfactory in the highest degree, as the steady increase since 1874-75 shews; and it is scarcely too much to assume, that the success of the past years is a guarantee of its future prosperity.

The following statistics shew the number of volumes issued in the various departments of literature during 1878-79; and although fiction bulks largely, being fully one-half of the total issue, the advocates of Free Libraries may point with pardonable pride to the number of volumes taken out of a more solid and instructive kind. In this respect Dundee will compare favourably with most of the English towns.

CLASS.	ISSUE.
Theology, Philosophy, &c., - - - -	5,657
Law, &c., - - - - -	1,714
Natural Philosophy, &c., - - - -	6,493

Carry forward,	<u>13,864</u>
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					Brought forward,	13,864
Natural History, &c., -	-	-	-	-		3,236
History, Biography, &c., -	-	-	-	-		12,278
Geography, Travels, &c., -	-	-	-	-		15,488
Commerce, &c., -	-	-	-	-		2,697
Science and the Arts, &c., -	-	-	-	-		3,058
Novels, -	-	-	-	-		94,419
Poetry and the Drama, -	-	-	-	-		4,797
Classical Literature, -	-	-	-	-		967
Encyclopædias, &c., -	-	-	-	-		319
Magazines, -	-	-	-	-		8,940
Miscellaneous, -	-	-	-	-		17,801
Total, - - - - -						<u>177,864</u>

The Reference Library, during the first year, issued 49,313 volumes, and in the eighth year, 94,036; total since 1869, 687,968 volumes. The books in this department have been recently transferred to new and very handsome bookcases erected in the Great Hall, now one of the finest Consulting Rooms in the three kingdoms. The total number of volumes in both Libraries is now 32,862, of which 26,711 are in the lending department, and 6,151 in the reference. In 1873, on a representation from some of the ratepayers in Lochee (a suburb of Dundee), the committee of the Free Library opened a branch in that place; but not being taken much advantage of, it was discontinued in May, 1875. In October, 1873, that part of the Institute designed for the Museum and Picture Gallery, and erected by the Library Committee, was completed. It comprises a large and finely-lighted Picture Gallery, two ante-rooms suitable for the display of prints or drawings, a long room on the ground floor well adapted for an Industrial Museum or a Lecture room, and three rooms designed for Museum purposes. On the completion of these buildings an Exhibition of Fine Art was opened to the public in November, 1873, and remained so till 31st January, 1874. With reference to this exhibition the Committee reported that it had been successful beyond their most sanguine expectations. At its close the specimens in the Museum and the Works of Art in the Picture Gallery were re-arranged; and on the 16th May, 1874, the whole

collection was opened to the public free of charge. In 1877-78 the first of a series of Fine Art Exhibitions was held in the same place. It contained many fine pictures and pieces of sculpture, large loan collections of rare specimens of Ornamental Art from the South Kensington and the India Museums, specimens of fictile ware, artistic furniture, &c., and was pronounced by competent judges to be one of the finest ever seen in the kingdom outside of London. It proved a complete success, as have also those by which it was followed in 1879 and 1880. The Museum is particularly rich in specimens of the various local industries; and one of its most interesting features is the extensive and varied collection of Arctic Fauna, for which it is indebted, in a large measure, to the owners and captains of the fleet of whaling vessels (the largest in the country) belonging to the port. Liberal support has been given both to the Museum and Picture Gallery by the inhabitants of Dundee and others. Last year the portion of the building belonging to the Albert Institute Co., which had been let to the Library Committee at a rent very much under its real value, was transferred to the Corporation for the nominal sum of £1,000, of which £300 was returned as a gift to the Reference department. After the transference the Council voted the sum of £2,500 out of the common good of the burgh, to complete the Institute Buildings as originally designed by Sir Gilbert Scott. The population of Dundee is about 155,000, and the Library rate produces about £2,400. Unfortunately the buildings are not yet nearly free from debt, the interest of which and the sinking fund swallow up a considerable portion of the income. We conclude this account of the largest and most important Library established in Scotland under the Free Libraries Act, by giving the closing sentences from the Committee's report for 1877. Referring to the various Societies connected with the Institute, and the general work of the Library, Museum, and Picture Gallery, it says— "The Committee think that they are justified in pointing to the mental activity and the development of artistic taste which has resulted in the successful establishment of these Societies dedicated to the promotion of the Fine Arts, of University culture, and of scientific investigation, as sure evidence that the books in the Library and the specimens in the Museum are not used merely for pleasure or recreation, but are steadily enabling the Free Library

and Museum to accomplish that higher mission which their promoters have always had in view." These are words pregnant with meaning, the full import of which it would be well for all interested in the welfare of their fellow-citizens to ponder.

PAISLEY.—On Thursday, 28th March, 1867, a Meeting of Ratepayers was held in the Gaelic Chapel, to consider as to the adoption of the Free Libraries Act. The Meeting was called by the Provost in terms of the statute, and, as is probably well known, originated in the offer of Sir Peter (then Mr.) Coats to provide a suitable building in the event of the inhabitants adopting the Act. The number of electors present was 504; and the Act was adopted by a majority of 483 to 21. Mr. Coats at once proceeded to implement his promise; the Memorial stone of the Free Library and Museum being laid on 27th April, 1869, with full Masonic honours, by the late Earl of Dalhousie, K.T. The style of the building is Grecian Ionic, and is highly creditable to the skill and taste of the Architect, John Honeyman, Esq., Glasgow. The most striking feature of the street elevation is the portico of the main entrance, consisting of four bold, fluted Ionic columns, bearing a massive pediment. The entablature of the Order is carried along the front, over columns and pilasters, and the roof is finished with a pediment at each end. The building is reached by a sweeping flight of steps; and the entrance hall is exceedingly effective. On the left of the entrance there is a spacious hall, which is used for lectures or occasional meetings. It is 50 feet long by 35 feet wide, with an apse at the west end. On the right of the entrance hall is the room appropriated to the Lending Library,—a noble apartment, with elegant bookcases and other Library fittings, designed in the Greek style of the building. Behind this apartment is the room for the Reference Library, of good proportions; and behind the Lecture Hall are placed the Committee Rooms. Right in front of the entrance hall is the Museum,—a lofty room lighted from the roof, and very effective in its general character. The ground floor is 45 feet long by 30 feet wide, and right open to the roof. At the ends, over the Reference Library and Committee Rooms, are spacious galleries; and there are also side galleries. These galleries, which extend over a space of 102 feet by 30 feet, are reached by

a spacious staircase. The Museum is appropriately fitted up. The munificent donor has omitted nothing that could add to the comfort and convenience of the visitors and officials; all parts of the building being heated by hot-water pipes; great attention, also, having been paid to the thorough ventilation of every apartment. The estimated cost of the building was £15,000; but from the anxiety of Sir Peter that every detail should be executed in the most substantial and satisfactory way, this sum must have been considerably exceeded. On 23rd September, 1870, the building was formally handed over by the donor to the Magistrates and Council on behalf of the community. The Library was opened for the issue of books in June, 1871.

Lending Library.—For the nucleus of this department the Committee are indebted to the Curators of the Paisley Library, which was founded in 1802. When presented to the Free Library it consisted of 7,743 volumes. To this were added 1,481 volumes, making up a total of 9,224. Appended will be found statistics which shew the issue and growth of both Lending and Reference departments.

Reference Library.—The Reference Library was formed by the Paisley Philosophical Society. Subscriptions were obtained by this Society from gentlemen in town and elsewhere for its formation, amounting to £1,612. Part of this sum was expended on the Museum. With the balance they furnished the Reference Library, and placed in it 5,037 volumes,—3,350 of which they purchased, 1,327 were obtained by donation, and 360 consisted of part of the former Library belonging to the Society. The Society annually vote a sum for the purchase of works for this department. It was open to the public on 23rd December, 1872. Several important donations have been made to the Reference Library, amongst which we may mention the original MS. of Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*, in 68 volumes, presented by Thomas Coats, Esq., Paisley; Audubon's *Birds of America*, with coloured plates life size, 4 volumes, and *Ornithological Biography*, 5 volumes, presented by his brother, Sir Peter. The Museum, some time ago, received a very valuable present of over 1,700 skins of the birds of Hindustan, from Robert M'Neiledge Adam, Esq., H. M. Customs, Agra, India. Mr. Adam—a native of the district—has always taken a deep interest in the prosperity of

and has enriched it by many

valuable donations. The Museum contains numerous and interesting memorials of the many sons of Paisley who have made their mark in the world, and is now a remarkably good collection.

Very appropriately, the site of the Free Library and Museum Building is directly opposite the house where the great Christopher North first saw the light. As will be seen from the tables which follow, the circulation of books has not been so large as might have been expected; but the explanation of this may be found in the fact that, unlike the other Scotch towns where Free Libraries have been established, no material increase of population has taken place in Paisley for a long time. The inhabitants at last census numbered 48,257, and the penny rate produces over £700 per annum. Few towns in Scotland or England have had the good fortune to possess so munificent a citizen as the worthy founder of the Paisley Free Library and Museum. With a fine literary taste, an enthusiast in education, and a liberal patron of the Fine Arts, Sir Peter is one of whom Paisley may well feel proud. The current of his liberality has been deep and broad, and shews no indication of becoming stinted in volume, since he has added considerably to his original gift; and a few months ago he announced his intention of defraying the cost of an extension of the buildings, which the ever-increasing requirements of the Institution have made necessary.

Issue for each year since opening:—

YEAR.	LENDING LIBRARY. ISSUE.	READING-ROOM. ISSUE.	REFERENCE LIBRARY. ISSUE.
*1871	26,902	2,806	—
1872	65,326	3,334	—
1873	82,679	4,859	1,549
1874	76,635	3,503	1,704
1875	69,401	3,190	2,539
1876	47,195	3,460	3,220
†1877	48,322	3,437	2,629
1878	52,306	4,787	3,458
1879	55,865	5,649	3,502

524,631 35,025 18,601

Total issue, 578,257.

* Open from June to December.

† Shut for a month during 1877.

Issue in Lending Library during 1879, and number of Volumes in stock at December, 1879 :—

	ISSUE.	VOLS. IN LIBRARY.
Arts and Sciences, - - -	1,387	1,007
Divinity, &c., - - -	464	789
Fiction, - - -	37,104	3,404
General Literature, - - -	1,865	1,002
History and Biography, - - -	4,760	2,902
Magazines, - - -	6,323	1,991
Poetry and the Drama, - - -	805	523
Travel, &c., - - -	3,157	1,240
	55,865	12,858
Vols. in Reference Library,		5,202
	Total,	18,060

EDINBURGH.—On 19th November, 1867, a meeting of citizens favourable to the adoption of the Free Libraries Act was held in the Free Church Assembly Hall, the Lord Justice General (Inglis) in the chair. The first resolution—"That this meeting heartily approve of the Free Library Amendment Act, 1867, and desire that the same may be adopted by the citizens of Edinburgh as a means of promoting the enlightenment, recreation, and general benefit of the community"—was moved by Lord Neaves, and adopted by the meeting. Among the speakers were Lord Ardmillan and A. B. Shand (now Lord Shand); and it was resolved to present a requisition to the Lord Provost, according to the terms of the Act, requesting him to call a meeting of the citizens for the purpose of deciding whether the Act be adopted or not. Shortly after, a meeting of those opposed to the movement was convened, and a committee appointed, who sent deputations to the Philosophical Institution, and other kindred Societies, requesting their co-operation in obtaining signatures to a declaration of opinion adverse to the proposed establishment of Libraries supported by rates. This committee also issued a statement, setting forth that Free Libraries were unnecessary in Edinburgh, there being already over fifty institutions where books could be obtained at nominal rates, besides a large number of Reading-rooms.

Petitions were also presented to the Town Council from various bodies of workmen praying that the Council do *not* sanction the imposition of any additional assessment for the purpose of a Free Library.

The Lord Provost's Committee was appointed to report on the matter, and on 17th December they submitted a statement to the Council, which bore—"That after consideration the Committee were of opinion that in the circumstances no necessity existed for such a proposal." Bailie Skinner dissented from the finding. The report was adopted, Mr. John Hope objecting. Nothing daunted, however, the promoters presented the usual requisition for a public meeting to the Lord Provost; and a meeting was held in the Music Hall on 18th May, 1868,—His Lordship presiding. Mr. William Todd, compositor, moved the adoption of the Act, seconded by Mr. W. H. Muir, S.S.C. An amendment, that the Act be not adopted, was moved by Councillor Mossman. The meeting was very noisy, refusing to hear the speakers on either side. A show of hands was taken, with the result that the amendment was carried by an overwhelming majority. Edinburgh is, undoubtedly, well supplied with Libraries; but if we deduct the Advocates' Library, which, for lending purposes, is only available to members of the Faculty—other Libraries of a professional character, where the books are mostly of a technical nature—and the balance of similar institutions, large numerically, but whose rates of subscription put them practically beyond the reach of working men—it will be found that, notwithstanding its ancient reputation for culture and learning, much yet remains to be done before it has secured for its poorer citizens the same facilities for intellectual advancement which other large towns (where the Libraries Acts are in operation) have provided for their humblest dwellers.

This is a matter of such importance, from an educational point of view, that it will surely engage the attention of the Conference of the Association of Librarians to be held this year in Edinburgh, when such an impetus may be given to the Free Library movement as will carry it to a successful issue, and clear the character of Modern Athens from a blemish unworthy of her as a seat of learning.

FORFAR.—This ancient royal burgh, the county town of Angus, adopted the Free Libraries Act on 14th March, 1870.

From the first the proposal was received with considerable favour, and obtained the warm support of several of the Magistrates and local clergy.

The vote, taken at the statutory public meeting convened by the Provost, recorded a majority of 507 to 150 in favour of the adoption of the Act. The Library was opened on 7th January, 1871, *sans ceremonie*. At the opening it contained 2,423 volumes. These have been added to considerably,—the number of volumes in the Library, at August, 1879, being 3,952.

The issue during the first year was 12,860 volumes; and during last year, up to the end of August, 9,734 volumes. The total issue since opening is 94,792 volumes, being a yearly average issue of nearly 11,000 volumes, of which fiction forms about fifty per cent. There is no Picture Gallery, but a room has been set aside lately in the Town Hall buildings, where the Library is located, for Museum purposes, in which a case has been placed containing the nucleus of a Museum, consisting of specimens of natural history, coins, &c. The population of Forfar at last census was 11,031, and the amount derived from the Library rate (one penny) is over £100.

The Library is managed by a committee of ten members of the Town Council, and ten representatives from the householders. The Library is open daily from 9 till 3, and from 6 till 9, with a half holiday on Wednesday. The issue, in March, 1880, was larger than at any time since the opening, and the institution is unmistakably rising in public favour.

THURSO.—This, the most northerly town on the mainland of Scotland, has its Free Library. The Act was adopted in 1872, but the opening was delayed until 10th February, 1875. The collection, which then numbered about 800 volumes, was increased a few months afterwards to 1,100 by a donation from the Thurso Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society. The advent of the Library was eagerly welcomed by many, and the number of readers during the first and second years was large; but, like many other deserving institutions, the Thurso Library suffered from a scantily filled treasury, and would, unquestionably, have gone to the wall but

for the zealous exertions of the committee. These gentlemen, in 1876, organized an Industrial and Fine Art Exhibition in aid of the Library and Museum, which was opened by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The Exhibition proved a thorough success, and yielded a surplus of £100. The annual issues since the Library was opened are as follows:—

1875,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,912
1876,	-	.	-	-	-	-	-	6,011
1877,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,713
1878,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,011
1879,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,198

being a yearly average of 6,169. More than one-half of the issue is Fiction. George Eliot's works are much read, and religious literature of every description is perused with extraordinary avidity. The Librarian gives one instance, where an old man read the whole of Calmet's Commentary on the New Testament, 11 large volumes. Altogether, the citizens of this far northern town seem to make an intelligent use of their institution. Thurso is the smallest place in the three kingdoms possessing a Library established under the Free Libraries Act. The rate yields but £40 a-year, and the meagreness of the income entails a large amount of gratuitous service on the part of the officials. The Library has received numerous donations since opening, and now contains over 2,000 volumes. It is open for the issue of books two hours twice a-week. The population of Thurso at last census was 3,622.

GALASHIELS.—This town is the seat of a considerable woollen manufacture, and contains a population of about 15,000. The Public Libraries Act was adopted in 1872; and the Library was opened on 9th October, 1874. £2000 was subscribed by residents of the town and neighbourhood, to aid in the formation of the Library. At opening it contained 2,104 volumes, which, at the end of the fourth year, had increased to 3,279. The issue during the first year was 14,158, and during the fourth year 14,459 volumes. Total for the first four years, 57,973. The following figures give the number of volumes in the Library in each class, and the number issued during the four years:—

	ISSUE.	VOLS. IN LIBRARY.
Theology and Philosophy, - -	3,000	421
Science and Arts, - -	3,014	256
History, Biography, and Travel, -	12,522	958
Poetry, - - - -	1,902	165
Fiction, - - - -	28,818	764
Classical Literature, - -	201	41
Magazines, - - - -	1,595	287
Reference, - - - -	2,483	100
Miscellaneous, - - - -	4,438	287
	<hr/> 57,973	<hr/> 3,279

There is a Reading-room in connection with the Library, and a table is set apart in it for chess and draughts. Both Library and Reading-room are largely taken advantage of, particularly by the working classes.

There is no Museum or Picture Gallery; and the population being composed mainly of factory workers, but little use is made of the reference department. The Library is open three hours daily. Its annual income (from penny rate) is about £195.

That the Library is highly appreciated by the inhabitants, is evident from the foregoing statistics. It supplies what was acknowledged to be a great want, and the Committee are to be congratulated on its success.

ABERDEEN.—Aberdeen, or the “Granite City,” as the capital of the north is often designated, has long been renowned for its public spirit; and its natives are credited as being exceptionally shrewd and intelligent. It has a population numbering 88,189, is the seat of two Universities, and is the birthplace of many men distinguished in the world of letters, science, and art. Its most important industry, and one in which it has attained great fame, is shipbuilding; and the results achieved by the firms engaged in this department of labour are creditable alike to their skill and energy. Aberdeen possesses an admirable system of schools, and the opportunities afforded to the children of working men of acquiring a sound elementary and high class education, are perhaps second to none in Scotland. With all these advantages, it is singularly deficient in good Public Libraries available

to persons of limited incomes. With the exception of the Mechanics' Institute and Reading-room, of which more anon, there is no institution where books can be procured at a reasonable rate for perusal at home. The use of the University Libraries is, as a matter of course, restricted to the students attending college; and though there are many collections of books belonging to the various religious denominations in town, none of them are capable, neither do they aim at supplying the general wants of the citizens. The Mechanics' Institute Library contains over 12,000 volumes, and embraces the works of the best authors, ancient and modern, in all departments of literature. The annual subscription is very moderate, and entitles the members to the use of the Reading-room, which is well supplied with newspapers and periodicals. It is situated near the centre of the city, and considering the limited number of volumes it possesses, it has been the means of disseminating no small amount of good and useful information.

Of late years, however, there was a feeling that it was insufficient to meet the wants of such a large population; and on 7th May, 1872, a meeting was held in the Music Hall, to ascertain the opinion of the ratepayers as to the advisability of adopting the Libraries Act.

The meeting was largely attended, upwards of 1500 persons being present. A motion that the Act be adopted was proposed by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Treasurer Cooper. In support of the motion it was stated that the use of an excellent building had been offered rent free, subscriptions to the amount of nearly £4000 were expected to be made, and the Library of the Mechanics' Institute would also probably be handed over. The opponents of the Act urged that there was no necessity for adopting it, seeing that the Library already mentioned was not supported to the extent it ought to be, and the inference was that no general or widespread desire for an extension of reading facilities existed.

These objections were but the nominal reasons for opposing the adoption of the Act. The prospect of an additional rate for the maintenance of the Library aroused the hostility of the small house proprietors, who, indifferent to, or ignorant of, the advantages resulting from the establishment of a Free Library, formed

the backbone of the opposition, and left no means untried to defeat the proposal. These efforts were, unfortunately, too successful. The decision of the meeting was taken by voting cards, but only about one-half of those present voted. The numbers were, against, 488—for, 134; leaving the dissentients with a majority of 354. Of the 70 votes which were rejected on the ground of the voters not being eligible, 50 were in favour of the adoption of the Act. No further effort has since been made in this direction; but the growing popularity of Free Libraries, and the substantial advantages arising from their use wherever they have been established, makes the question of their adoption in Aberdeen only a matter of time. The Aberdonians are too shrewd to allow such an admirable method for self-culture to remain long untried; and it may be safely predicted, that but a few years will have passed when the "Granite City" will follow the example of her neighbours in the south, who are now reaping the benefits of a wider culture in the higher moral and intellectual tone of their citizens.

ARBROATH.—Arbroath possesses the unenviable distinction of being the only town in Scotland that has twice rejected the proposal to adopt the Free Libraries Act. For a considerable time prior to making the first effort—in 1873—an under-current of complaint of the want of a good Public Library at a rate accessible to the poorest, had been finding an outlet in the local newspapers in the form of letters, in which the writers descanted, in language more or less pathetic, on the difficulty they encountered in procuring books to read at a charge commensurate with their incomes. These complaints, which mostly came from working men, at last took such definite shape as to attract the attention and excite the sympathy of a number of gentlemen resident in the town and neighbourhood, who, impressed by the apparent earnestness with which the writers appealed for help to enable them to satisfy their intellectual cravings, cast about for some means by which they might obviate the difficulty. At this time the only public Library in Arbroath accessible to the general public was the Mechanics' Institute Library, founded in 1832, and consisting of about 3,000 volumes, many of which, though valuable, were scarcely of a kind suitable to the popular

taste. A Library instituted in 1797, and known as the Arbroath Subscription Library, was practically closed against the bulk of the community,—the annual subscription being half a-guinea. Several attempts were made to popularize this institution by getting the subscription lowered; but the disinclination of some of the shareholders to such an innovation rendered these efforts abortive. The failure of these well-meant endeavours suggested the advisability of trying to secure the adoption of the Free Libraries Act; and, accordingly, a public meeting was convened on 25th March, 1873, to test the feeling of the constituency. The movement was enthusiastically supported by the large manufacturers,—some of whom, in conjunction with one or two local clergymen, appeared on the platform to lend their aid in carrying it to a successful issue. From the commencement of the proceedings, however, it was apparent that a powerful opposition had determined to give the proposal its quietus, and the upshot was that the promoters were ignominiously defeated. Subsequent to this another and more successful effort to get the Arbroath Subscription Library opened to the general public was made; and in January, 1875, all difficulties having been overcome, this Library, augmented to the extent of several thousand volumes of the freshest and most varied literature purchased out of a sum of £1,100, subscribed chiefly by the mill and factory owners in Arbroath, was opened to all who chose to take advantage of it, at the extremely modest annual charge of half a-crown. But the expectations of the promoters as to its success have, unfortunately, been doomed to disappointment. Our space forbids tracing in detail the gradual decline in the membership. Suffice it to say the number fell from 1,070 in the first year to 666 in 1879. This, combined with the constant drain on its funds, brought about a crisis in its affairs; and a special meeting of the members was held about the close of 1879, to consider the position of the Library, the result of which was that a requisition was signed calling on the Provost to take the necessary steps to ascertain the wishes of the ratepayers as to whether the Libraries Act should be adopted. As on the former occasion the promoters of this movement were the large manufacturers and others whose rental would have made them the most heavily assessed; but an opposition of the most active and determined character set to work to

defeat the measure, and, unhappily for the credit of Arbroath, it was only too successful. The method of testing the opinion of the ratepayers was by voting papers. The result shewed that there were 1632 Noes against 966 Ayes,—the malcontents being in a majority of 666. That this result was the outcome of an intelligent consideration of the question, is vetoed by the fact that, with the exception of a small percentage of the objectors, the great bulk of them were misled by the leaders of the opposition, who loudly and persistently maintained, in defiance of the Act, that a much higher rate than a penny per pound could be levied. The importance of the boon so foolishly rejected may be judged when we state that, had the act been adopted, the valuable collection of books known as the Arbroath Public Library, numbering about 14,000 volumes, and the balance of the £1,100 subscribed in 1875—amounting to £500, would have been handed over to the ratepayers. This the Arbroathians refused; and in doing so, inflicted an injury, not only on themselves, but on those who will come after them, the magnitude of which it would be difficult to overrate.

GLASGOW.—To the munificence of private donors is due, in a great measure, the origin and maintenance of many of the most important Public Libraries in the kingdom. Especially is this the case with the great Libraries of England, which for centuries have been the recipients of gifts, in the shape of money and books, to an extent unknown either in Scotland or Ireland. The British Museum, one of the first in the world, both in variety and extent, originated in a bequest by Sir Hans Sloane, in 1753, of his collection to the British Government. A gift of a somewhat similar character by Sir Thomas Bodley was the foundation of the Oxford Public University Library. Liverpool is indebted to the generosity of three of its citizens for its Library buildings,—the Walker Art Gallery, and the Picton Reading-room. Until recent years Glasgow had received but a scant share of the golden harvest which had been so bountifully lavished on the more favoured places we have mentioned. With the exception of that of Walter Stirling in 1791, no other bequest for Library purposes had been made to the capital of the West until 1863, when Mr. George Baillie, senior Member of the Faculty of Procurators,

Glasgow, devised a sum of £18,000 in favour of the Dean and Council of that Faculty, for the endowment and maintenance of an Educational Institution in Glasgow, to be called "Baillie's Institution." By the conditions of the Trust, the fund was not to become available for twenty-one years after date, (viz., 1884,) by which time it was estimated it would amount to £46,000.

The object Mr. Baillie had in view was (1) "To aid the self-culture of the operative classes from youth to manhood and old age, by furnishing them with warm, well-lighted, and every way comfortable accommodation at all seasons, for reading useful and interesting books in apartments of proper size attached to one or more Free Public Libraries provided for them; (2) to afford to the children of the same classes the means of unsectarian, moral, and intellectual instruction, and industrial training in one or more schools and school-grounds," gratuitously, or on payment of such small fees as might be necessary. Should the fund prove insufficient for the support of both Schools and Libraries, the Trustees are directed to defer the establishment of the former. Numerous directions are given as to the management of the Institution, and Mr. Baillie recommended that the Libraries be kept open on Sunday, as the only day on which the working man can avail himself of their advantages. The Trustees are at liberty to make use of any means which might tend to increase the utility of the institution,—such as amalgamating with other Libraries, either under the Free Libraries Acts, or otherwise, but with the proviso that the identity and name of "Baillie's Institution" is to be preserved. The Libraries are to be Reference at first.

In the same year in which Mr. Baillie made his gift to the city, Lord Provost Blackie moved at a meeting of Town Council for an inquiry regarding Free Libraries. The motion was carried, and in 1864 a very able and elaborate report was submitted. The report recommended the adoption of the Free Libraries Acts in the city, and was approved of by the Council; but no action followed. During the summer of 1868, Councillor J. L. Lang gave notice of a motion on the subject, but for various reasons the matter was put off from month to month, with the result that it did not again come up for discussion. In these circumstances the same gentleman, on December 22nd, 1868, convened a meeting of

those favourable to the movement in the Merchants' Hall. In a lengthy speech he answered the objections commonly urged against the Free Library movement, and pointed out the advantages likely to be derived from the adoption of the Act. Several other speakers followed, and the meeting appointed a small committee to disseminate information on the subject, and to take such other steps as might seem necessary. In 1874 the Philosophical Society took the matter in hand, and appointed a committee, who, after an interview with the Town Council in January, 1876, reported to the Society that it was desirable that immediate action should be taken, with special reference to a bequest of over £66,000, which Mr. Stephen Mitchell, a Glasgow Merchant, had made for the purpose of founding a large Public Library in the city. The Society re-appointed and enlarged the committee, with power to deal with the whole question. At its first meeting the committee resolved itself into a General Committee, consisting of over fifty gentlemen connected with the city.

A requisition, drawn up in terms of the Statute, and signed by over two hundred householders, including the three city members, was presented to the Lord Provost, requesting him to call a meeting of householders, to decide as to the adoption of the Act. The meeting took place in the City Hall, on 17th April, 1876,—Lord Provost Bain presiding. By arrangement the number of speakers was limited to two on each side. Dr. J. A. Campbell (now M.P. for Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) moved, and Mr. George Miller seconded the adoption of the Act. An amendment that it be not adopted was proposed, and a show of hands taken. The numbers being apparently equal, a poll was demanded. The following was the result:—For the amendment, 1779; for the motion, 993; majority against the adoption of the Act, 786. Considerable feeling was manifested during the proceedings, and it was amid great interruption that Dr. Campbell managed to deliver his speech. The General Committee presented a report of their proceedings to the Philosophical Society, and the convener, Mr. J. Clelland Burns, intimated his intention of defraying the expenses incurred during the agitation.

Retracing our steps a little we find that in May, 1874, the Town Council accepted the bequest of Mr. Stephen Mitchell, and appointed a committee to administer the trust. According

to Mr. Mitchell's will, the Library was to be *one large Public Library*, "with all modern accessories." "All books not immoral (and by immoral is not meant books which simply controvert present opinions on political or religious questions) are to be freely admitted, and form part of it; and the Library is to be accessible to the Public free of charge, for purposes of reference and consultation." "Other Libraries or collections of books, and such collections of vertu or science and art as in the opinion of the Town Council will increase the utility and value of the Library, may be added to, and form part of it." The fund to be allowed to accumulate until it should amount to £70,000, and the Institution to be called "*The Mitchell Library*." In 1876 the committee appointed a librarian, and on 1st November of the following year the Library was formally opened by the Hon. James Bain, Lord Provost. The Library occupies two large flats (one of them rent free) of a building in Ingram Street, East, belonging to Councillor Neil. The lower room is devoted to the Library, one-half being set apart for the books, the readers being accommodated in the other.

The upper flat is used as a Reading-room, and is supplied with over 150 periodicals and magazines, including the principal Continental and American journals. At the opening the Library contained 14,432 volumes, which, at December 31st, 1879, had been increased to 28,532. The issue has been as follows:—First day, (5th November, 1877,)—186; November and December, 1877,—18,970; 1878,—194,314; 1879,—379,744; total,—593,032; total, March 31st, 1880,—711,338. These figures tell their own tale, and furnish the most significant proof, if proof were wanting, of the need for such an institution in the city. As an indication of the character of the reading, we give the number of volumes issued in the various classes since opening, and also give the number of volumes in each class in the Library:—

	VOLS. IN LIBRARY.	ISSUE.
Theology, Philosophy, Ecclesiastical History, -	4,279	49,867
History, Biography, Voyages and Travels, -	6,793	156,018
Law, Politics, Sociology, Commerce, -	2,445	11,254
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carry forward, -	13,517	217,139

Brought forward,	-	13,517	217,139
Arts, Sciences, Natural History,	-	5,218	117,305
Poetry and Drama, including the "Poets' Corner,"	3,740		48,729
Linguistics,	-	547	13,352
Prose Fiction,	-	160	28,253
Miscellaneous Literature,	-	4,800	168,254
<hr/>			
Total,	27,982		593,032
Duplicates,	550		
<hr/>			
			28,532

Daily average from 5th November, 1877, to 31st December, 1879,—1,079.

Several special collections are being formed in the Library. One of these, the "Poets' Corner," designed to contain the works of Scotia's versifiers, has attained considerable magnitude. The report of the treasurer, Councillor Wilson, recently issued, states that the "Corner" at present contains the writings of 1,222 Scottish Poets and verse writers, of whom 1,022 are named, the remainder being anonymous.

These writings are contained in 1,920 volumes and tracts, published in no fewer than seventy cities and towns—more than sixty of them being in Scotland. The object aimed at is one that will meet with the warm approval of all true Scotchmen. Such a collection would afford incomparable facilities for studying what the report truly describes as "one of the most distinctive features of our national literature."

A collection of works relating to Glasgow is also being formed. It contains already over 700 books and pamphlets; and a division has been set apart for specimens of early Glasgow printing. The steady increase in the number of visitors to the Library has made the question of securing larger and more convenient premises a serious one. The matter is under the consideration of the committee, and it is to be hoped they may be able to provide a building worthy of the Library and of the city. In such an important centre of industry as Glasgow, a large Reference Library is essentially necessary, and little surprise need be felt at the success which has hitherto attended the "Mitchell." It would rather have been matter for astonishment had any other

result accrued from the opening of an institution so admirably adapted for the purpose for which it was designed; and it remains for the citizens of Glasgow to complete the work so auspiciously begun, by adopting the Free Libraries Act, and by its means give to the very poorest an opportunity for self-culture and intellectual improvement. Into the details for carrying out such a scheme it is unnecessary here to enter, further than to state, that it would necessitate the establishment of a great Central Lending Library, and the opening of Branch Libraries in such localities as would best suit the wants of the residents. The income derivable from the rate, combined with that of the "Mitchell," the "Baillie," and the "Stirling," ought to be quite sufficient to enable Glasgow to maintain a system of Libraries not inferior to that of any of the great towns in England; while the advantages flowing from them would, we are convinced, in a short time convert the sturdiest opponents of the Free Libraries Acts into their staunchest supporters.

HAWICK.—At a public meeting on 11th March, 1878, called by the Provost on a requisition from a number of householders, the Free Libraries Act was adopted unanimously.

Several subscriptions towards the erection of a Library building, and for the purchase of books, were promised prior to the meeting; and on their appointment the Library Committee issued an appeal for assistance, which was attended with much success. The amount subscribed up to April, 1880, was about £1,300. Pending the acquirement of a suitable building, the Committee decided to rent temporary premises, in order that a Reading-room and Library might be opened with as little delay as possible.

Accommodation having been secured in the Hawick Exchange, the Reading-room was opened to the public on 1st November, 1878, with a good selection of London and Provincial daily and weekly papers, and the principal monthly and quarterly magazines. The room is large, well lighted, and comfortably furnished, and is much taken advantage of.

The Library was opened 17th March, 1879, with 2,260 volumes, to which were added 364 in July of the same year. The books are catalogued in divisions as follows, and numbered consecutively:—*A*, History; *B*, Biography; *C*, Travels; *D*, Science and

Art; *E*, Fiction; *F*, Poetry; *G*, Theology and Religion; *H*, Miscellaneous; *J*, Reference. They are also arranged under the authors' names alphabetically. The number of readers' cards issued has been 3,096, representing all classes of the community; and the number of volumes issued from 17th March, 1879, to 17th March, 1880, has been 30,949. During the year given the Library was open on 293 days, the average daily issue being thus nearly 106 volumes. The following table shews the number of volumes in each class in the Library, and the number issued:—

						ISSUE.	VOLUMES IN LIBRARY.
A,	-	-	-	-	-	2,108	375
B,	-	-	-	-	-	2,126	276
C,	-	-	-	-	-	2,607	149
D,	-	-	-	-	-	1,586	205
E,	-	-	-	-	-	18,383	778
F,	-	-	-	-	-	1,071	148
G,	-	-	-	-	-	870	182
H,	-	-	-	-	-	2,198	394
J,	-	-	-	-	-	—	117
						<hr/> 30,949 <hr/>	<hr/> 2,624 <hr/>

Morgan's Library Indicator is used, and is found to work very satisfactorily. The rate of assessment is a penny per pound, and amounts to about £195. The sum expended in books since the opening of the Library, has been £480; and on newspapers, at the rate of £45 per annum. The population of Hawick is about 15,000. The Library is open nineteen hours each week, and the Reading-room from 9 a.m. till 10 p.m. daily. There is no other Public Reading-room in the town, and only one other Library,—viz., "The Hawick Subscription Library;" but there are several small Libraries in connection with some of the Sunday schools, and also with some of the factories. That the establishment of the Library has been thoroughly appreciated by the people, is evident from the returns of the first year's work. These shew a total turnover of nearly twelve,—a result of which the committee have just reason to feel proud. With a larger number of volumes at command even this high figure would be considerably increased; and it is to be hoped the committee may be enabled

soon to add to the stock of books, and the Free Library, which has already been attended with so much success, may take permanent rank as one of the most popular and valued of the local institutions.

The Act was adopted in INVERNESS in 1877, and a building for the accommodation of the Library, Museum, and School of Arts is in course of erection. Mr. Andrew Carnegie, a native of DUNFERMLINE, resident in New York, has given the sum of £5,000 to assist in founding a Library in his native town, on the understanding that the citizens adopt the Free Libraries Act, which they did in the early part of this year.

In all, nine towns have availed themselves of the advantages of the Free Libraries Acts. In seven of these Libraries are in full operation; and their total issue, up to the end of last year, was nearly 3,000,000 volumes; and if we include the Mitchell Library, fully half-a-million more. The progress of the movement in Scotland has been very slow. In this respect Scotchmen have allowed their proverbial canniness to outrun their discretion, and have become somewhat oblivious of the fact, that Libraries, whether supported by rates or otherwise, are an essential part of any educational system, having the slightest pretensions to completeness. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that in Scotland, where education is so highly prized, so little advantage has been taken of the means provided by the Legislature for the establishment of Free Libraries; and the surprise is not at all lessened when the small amount of assessment required for their maintenance is taken into consideration. In most cases the annual charge would not amount to more than one shilling per ratepayer, — a sum so paltry that one finds it difficult to believe that this is the real ground of objection to the adoption of the Acts. We believe a suspicion exists that a Free Library is simply an institution where the wealthy citizens are favoured at the expense of the poor, and this has had a good deal to do with the hostility exhibited in some places against the proposal to establish Free Libraries. That there is no foundation for such a notion is abundantly manifest from the annual reports of a number of these institutions where the occupations of the readers are shewn. In all cases the preponderance of the working-man element over what, by courtesy, is called “the gentry,” is enor-

mous, and shews conclusively, that while the banker or manufacturer may occasionally avail themselves of their right to read from the Free Library, there is nothing the working-man is taxed for which gives him so ample a return. The unfounded character of this suspicion is further proved by the readiness, we might almost say the eagerness, with which gentlemen of means contribute towards the erection and furnishing of these Libraries. In too many cases their philanthropic intentions have been balked and thwarted by the ignorance and narrow-mindedness we have alluded to; but we have every reason to believe that this feeling of distrust is on the wane, and instances are every day occurring which shew that a healthier and more amicable spirit is being developed. As the belief that men of wealth and position are really in earnest in their endeavours to assist their less fortunate brethren, becomes more matured, when the working-man comes to believe that the offer of a Free Library, a Museum, or Picture Gallery, is made with a genuine desire that he may enjoy the opportunity of becoming acquainted with what is most rare and useful in the literary, the artistic, and scientific world,—the only condition being that he shall pay a few pence per annum for the right of access to their treasures,—then we may look confidently forward to a higher and healthier tone, moral and intellectual, among the great bulk of the community, than has prevailed in the past.

In conclusion, we beg to tender our sincere thanks to the Librarians of the various Libraries noted in this pamphlet, and those other gentlemen who have so kindly assisted us. Appended is a list of the Free Libraries in Scotland, with their principal officials.

AIRDRIE FREE LIBRARY, -	LIBRARIAN,	WILLIAM LITHGOW.
DUNDEE " "	- "	JOHN MACLAUCHLAN.
FORFAR " "	- "	WILLIAM GRANT.
GALASHIELS "	- "	MRS. DICK.
GLASGOW MITCHELL LIBRARY, "		F. T. BARRETT.
"	SUB-LIBRARIAN,	JOHN INGRAM.
HAWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY,	LIBRARIAN,	MRS. ELLIOTT.
PAISLEY FREE "	"	MORRIS YOUNG.
"	SUB-LIBRARIAN,	J. G. RENFREW.
THURSO FREE "	LIBRARIAN,	JAMES CAMPBELL.





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The free libraries of Scotland.

Widener Library

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